take emergency action to check the inflow of silk and other Japanese products, the sale of which makes possible the continuation of the war. The recent Gallup poll indicated that the American people are overwhelmingly opposed to Japanese aggression in China. If this sentiment can be made articulate within the next week, by protests to Washington and by refusals to buy Japanese goods, the Chinese people will be vastly strengthened in their own defense.

Russia and the World

TWENTY years after its founding the Soviet government has a new job on its hands. New forces, unthought of in 1917, have profoundly changed its status and function. Too often this change is ignored by those who discuss the present position and behavior of the government of Stalin. They are apt to assume that Russia is or could be or should be still primarily the focal point of world revolution. But this is not the case. The Soviet government has been impelled to engage in a different enterprise—the leadership of the anti-fascist forces of the world. Twenty years ago when Soviet Russia emerged as the first socialist state it was a center of revolutionary action and propaganda; today it has become, above all else, a great power. There are those who consider this change a treasonable surrender of revolutionary purpose and principle. There are others who refuse to accept it as a fact. But there are more, we believe, in every country, who look upon the present international role of Russia, not only as historically inevitable, but as the chief element of hope in a world from which order and sanity have almost vanished.

It is a simple truth that the civilization of the world is threatened with extinction. Normal people shrink from a concept so sensational, but the fact remains. We have watched, year by year, the successful encroachments of the forces of violence and barbarism: upon Manchuria, Ethiopia, Spain, and now all of China; upon long-established institutions of humanity and enlightenment in the fascist countries themselves. We have seen primitive tribal loyalties and superstitions darken modern minds. We see trade languish and international finance resort to make-shift forms of barter. We are witnessing what may be the beginning of an end. The anti-Communist pact, uniting Italy with Germany and Japan, presents this major threat in concrete and detailed terms; the fascist international is organized and prepared for united action.

But the non-fascist countries are at odds with one another and within themselves. They fear the collapse of the fascist states almost as much as they fear their power; Britain's imperialist interests clash with its class interests; the League machinery cracks and stalls, and new, even more futile, diplomatic devices are set up. Among the non-fascist states, Russia has displayed the largest measure of realism and courage. M. Litvinov has become a sort of international touchstone of sanity, although his directness and common sense are so shocking to his fellow-diplomats that they are generally attacked as deliberate provocation. The one who points out the king's nakedness is these days all too likely himself to be accused of indecent exposure. But Soviet foreign policy continues to concentrate on the fascist menace and to utilize all its resources of power, persuasion, warning, and diplomatic skill to align the democratic nations on its side.

Unfortunately Russia, too, is divided, although the lines of division are obscured by censorship and the lack of open political discussion. For more than a year the purge of Communist Party members and state functionaries has continued. Official explanations are unconvincing because they are inadequate. "Trotskyist," "diversionist," "wrecker"—like "red" and "Bolshevik" in other countries—are tags rather than descriptions or indictments. Bitter opposition to the government's policy undoubtedly exists among thousands of unreconstructed Bolsheviks. They have seen the world revolution sidetracked to make way for collaboration with anti-fascist groups and non-fascist governments. Many must have refused to follow the new line or have accepted it without conviction. And some may well have translated their resentment into active opposition to the regime. Add to these elements of honest dissent the army of actual fascist spies and plotters, agents of Germany and Japan, of Poland and the Baltic states, at work in government agencies, in industry, in the army; add the most potent ingredients of all—suspicion and intolerance and fear, the inevitable mood of a country faced with the threat of imminent war—and you have an unstable domestic brew.

Sympathetic outsiders have watched the progress of the purge with an anxiety born of the new dependence on Soviet power. Only the integrity and strength of the Soviet Union can reassure the faltering elements of opposition to fascism in Britain and France and the rest of Europe. If Russia is weak or believed to be weak, Hitler and Mussolini are strengthened in the same degree. Naturally the fascist powers are doing all they can to create distrust of Soviet strength even while they organize an alliance to fight the alleged Communist menace. The rest of us would do well to judge events in the light of the available facts rather than to consult fascist hopes or our own fears. The Soviet Union has survived twenty years of intermittent purges; never has the government tolerated the existence of serious opposition. But the objectives of socialist control and construction have never been lost sight of even when they have been blocked by such major obstacles as war and famine and internal resistance. Impressive gains have been made in industry and agriculture, as Maxwell Stewart's article in this issue so clearly shows. The largest standing army in Europe has been built and equipped—and events in Spain have testified to the quality of its equipment. Above all, the people and their government are united in two things: a passionate opposition to war—knowing well that the future of socialism in Russia depends on continued peace; and a still stronger determination to resist fascism even if resistance means war—for the success of fascism would spell the end of socialism and the Soviet government and the essence of Western civilization as well.